



State of Illinois
JB Pritzker, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Omer Osman, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 12, 2023

CONTACT:
Paul Wappel 217.685.0082
Maria Castaneda 312.447.1919

Lincoln Service schedule change as passenger trains reach 110 mph

Chicago-to-St. Louis project reducing travel times, improving safety and service

CHICAGO – Gov. JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Transportation today announced schedule changes for Amtrak’s Lincoln Service trains, following the successful implementation of the Chicago-to-St. Louis high-speed rail project and enabling passenger service to reach 110 mph. Effective June 26, the changes will eliminate approximately 15 minutes from existing 90 mph runtimes and 30 minutes from the initial 79 mph schedule.

“After many years of construction and testing for a nearly \$2 billion investment, I couldn’t be happier to announce that our transition to 110 mph rail service for the Lincoln Service trains has been completed,” said Gov. Pritzker. “From saving residents precious time to improving the reliability and safety of our transit system, this milestone makes it clear to the rest of the nation that Illinois is a leader in transportation, infrastructure, and innovation.”

In addition to increasing speeds, the \$1.96 billion project has boosted reliability and safety while providing upgraded and new stations.

The project also provided major safety upgrades at 212 grade crossings by installing four-quadrant gates and loop detectors to help prevent collisions with vehicles on the tracks. Pedestrian gates and fencing were installed to prevent pedestrian accidents. Thirty-nine crossings deemed at-risk were permanently closed.

“The railway has always been a vital component of our state’s infrastructure, but today we are taking a major step in modernizing rail services. The new high-speed schedule will allow Illinoisans to get around faster while still enjoying the comforts of Amtrak,” said U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin. “Making high-speed rail, and today’s schedule changes to Lincoln Service trains, happen has long been a priority of mine. I’m pleased to see the federal grants brought home to Illinois are making a true impact in the lives, and travel, of the people of Illinois. I look forward to my first trip on a better, faster Lincoln Service train.”

“Modernizing our rail services means faster travel times and access to safer, more reliable service,” said U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth. “The Lincoln Service line is a critical element of our state’s transportation network, and I’m so pleased to see the results of critical federal funding to improve the lives and travel options for Illinoisans.”

In conjunction with its partner communities, IDOT opened new stations in Dwight, Pontiac, Carlinville and Alton, renovated the Lincoln station, improved the existing Normal station and made upgrades to the Springfield station. A separate project to build a new multimodal station in Joliet was completed in 2018, with a second phase starting in 2021. The facilities provide a better customer experience and amenities, such as free Wi-Fi and connections to bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The new and improved stations act as gateways to their communities, inviting tourism and providing additional travel options for the public.

“With these changes and upgrading to higher-speed service on the state’s signature passenger rail line, Illinois solidifies its status as the transportation hub of North America,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “We are proud of the work with our partners to deliver this improved service, which strengthens a safe, reliable option for travel while connecting so many of the state’s major institutions and communities.”

A final component of the project: The acquisition of new rolling stock to be used on Lincoln Service trains and other Midwest routes. Thirty-three new locomotives have been in service since late 2017. Illinois is also part of a consortium of states working with the Federal Railroad Administration and California to procure 88 new single-level railcars for use throughout Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin and Michigan. More than 50 of the cars are currently in revenue service on Amtrak Midwest routes.

Funding for the project includes \$1.66 billion in federal funding, primarily through an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant awarded in 2010, as well as \$300 million in state and non-federal funds. The project broke ground in 2010 with major infrastructure improvements completed in 2018. From 2019 to 2023, IDOT has worked with project partners the Federal Railroad Administration, Union Pacific Railroad and Amtrak to install and test a Positive Train Control system that allows passenger trains to increase their speed first to 90 mph and now 110 mph.

For additional information on the new schedule or to purchase tickets, visit [amtrak.com/midwest](https://www.amtrak.com/midwest).

###